

became the Office of International Trade (Chapter 120, Acts of 1995). Placed under the Division of Marketing in 1995, the Office was renamed Office of International Business in 1996 (Chapter 321, Acts of 1996).

The Office directs and coordinates State efforts to promote international business development. Its goal is to expand job and income opportunities through international trade, commerce, and reverse investment programs.

The Office helps Maryland firms sell their products and services in the international marketplace through participation in international trade fairs and promotional events. The Office also encourages foreign companies to locate new business enterprises in Maryland and to retain or expand international enterprises here. The Office coordinates its work with federal, State and local agencies. Within the Office are four units: Foreign Investment; International Trade Development; Sister States; and Trade Promotion.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT GROUP

Helga R. Weschke, *Manager*
(410) 767-6680

Formerly under the Maryland International Division, the Foreign Investment Group began in 1992 as the Office of Foreign Investment and became the Office of Inward Investment in 1994. In 1995, it was renamed the Foreign Investment Group.

The Group was organized by the Department to encourage international businesses to locate and invest in Maryland. The Group advises foreign-owned companies interested in Maryland on the best place to locate their business and on the financial, technical and training resources available to them.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT

William Kutson, *Manager*
(410) 333-8180

International Trade Development was formed by the Department in 1988 as the Office of International Business Development. Reorganized as the Office of Developing Markets in 1992, it received its present name in 1995.

International Trade Development assists Maryland firms in exporting their products and services to international markets. The office helps these businesses effectively initiate or expand their overseas marketing.

SISTER STATES GROUP

Jean Van Buskirk, *Manager*
(410) 767-3386

The Sister States Group was initiated in 1986 as the Maryland Sisters Program. It received its present name in 1995. The Sister States Group develops and maintains international relationships which

benefit Maryland's trade and foreign prospect development efforts. The Program establishes special formal agreements between Maryland and states or provinces in other countries to promote trade and the exchange of business, cultural, educational and scientific information. Maryland presently has seven sister states: Anhui Province, People's Republic of China; Jalisco, Mexico; Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan; Kyongsangnam-Do, Korea; Nord Pas de Calais, France; the Lodz Region in Poland; and the Leningrad Region in Russia. Maryland also has a partnership agreement with the State of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil; an agreement of mutual cooperation with the Walloon Region in Belgium; and a collaborative agreement with the City of St. Petersburg, Russia.

TRADE PROMOTION GROUP

Linda C. Sturgell, *Manager*
(410) 333-8180

In 1992, the Trade Promotion Group was established by the Department as the Office of Marketing and Operations. It was renamed in 1995. The Trade Promotion Group builds alliances in the international community, bringing trade intelligence and opportunities to Maryland companies. The Group also manages events and coordinates international trade missions. It works to uncover and promote world markets, as well as project and trade opportunities for Maryland businesses.

DIVISION OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Vernon J. Thompson, *Assistant Secretary*
for Regional Development

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Baltimore, MD 21202—3316 (410) 767-0082

The Division of Regional Development began in 1991 as the Division of Business Resources. It was reorganized under its present name in 1995.

The Division forms productive relationships between the Department and public and private regional economic development organizations. The Division coordinates programs and strategies that help companies and regions become even more competitive and productive.

The Division has four offices: Federal Response and Technology Commercialization; Regional Response; Regulatory and Environmental Assistance; and Small Business Development Centers.

MARYLAND ADVISORY COMMISSION ON MANUFACTURING COMPETITIVENESS

Patrick J. Hanrahan, *Chair*, 1997

The Maryland Commission on Manufacturing Competitiveness was formed in 1994 (Chapter